

Human Services Advisory Council Minutes of April 20, 2006 Meeting

HSAC Members Present: Mary Beth Sefton, Leslie Gordon, David Rogers
Staff: Pam Doran

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:06 by Chair David Rogers.

Public Comment: There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the January 12, January 19, and February 16th meetings were approved unanimously; minutes from the January 26th meeting were approved with one correction. The minutes from the joint HSAC/Housing Commission meeting of January 26th were approved unanimously.

Report from Chair: David Rogers reported that he presented HSAC's Community Service Fund recommendations to City Council. The presentation was well received.

New Business:

Pipestem Lots - City Council has asked the Boards and Commissions for feedback on proposed changes to the Pipestem Lot Code, which was given first reading at Council's March 27rd meeting. Proposed changes range from totally disallowing pipestems to making changes that would bring the code more in line with new development requirements (i.e. requiring greater setbacks, less lot coverage, increasing screening or road frontage). It is felt by some that the current regulations have allowed too many homes to be built on pipestem lots that are too large for the surrounding neighborhoods. HSAC members were interested in seeing what neighborhoods in the city are zoned R-1A and R-1B, where pipestems are allowed. This information is available on the City's website. There was also a brief discussion of substandard lots in the City, and possible future changes in the code for how these properties may be developed.

Accessory Dwelling Units - City Council is also considering changing regulations concerning accessory dwelling units, in response to citizen concerns. These types of building could be used to increase the affordable housing stock and also assist elderly residents by allowing families or others to live in separate structures but on the same property. Currently these units are allowed by special permit. Changing the regulations could also allow more control over the size and style of the structures. Issues include what would happen to these accessory dwellings upon sale of the property, and the impact on such services as sewer, electric and gas.

HSAC members agreed that these two types of development need to be reviewed but that they seem to be somewhat at odds; the pipestem changes would limit development of housing while the accessory dwelling units would encourage more development. HSAC members felt this represents a somewhat piecemeal approach to housing issues, and encourages the City to establish a more holistic and clearer vision of housing development before acting on these separate policies. David Rogers agreed to draft a letter to Council expressing these ideas, and will circulate the letter to HSAC for feedback before it is finalized. Pam Doran noted that the

Pipestem Lot Code changes are scheduled for second reading by Council on May 8, so feedback from the commissions is needed before then.

Old Business:

Budget and CSF Status - City Council is expected to approve the budget on April 24th with the H.H.S. budget, including the proposed CIP items, intact. It was noted that both the Homeless Shelter and Falls Church Housing Corporation/Ives House project have appealed directly to Council for the additional funding they requested but did not receive through the CDBG and CSF grant processes.

Mattie Gundry Award - HSAC will look at reviving the Mattie Gundry Award in the next few months.

The HSAC meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2006.

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